

CLAIMS

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1. A method of multicasting information to a set of clients comprising:
transmitting the information to a primary client from a server; and
instructing the primary client to forward the information to a secondary client.
 2. A method of multicasting information to a set of clients as recited in claim 1
further including receiving performance information from the set of clients.
 3. A method of transmitting a customized offer to an applicant as recited in claim 1
further including pinging clients to determine the network location of the clients.
 4. A method of transmitting a customized offer to an applicant as recited in claim 1
wherein the information is streaming video.
 5. A method of multicasting information to a set of clients comprising:
determining a performance parameter for each of the clients;
selecting a subset of the clients to be primary clients based on the performance
parameter;
transmitting the information to the primary clients for retransmission to other
clients in the set of clients.
 6. A method of multicasting information to a set of clients comprising:
determining a network location for each of the clients;
selecting a subset of the clients to be primary clients based on the network
location;
transmitting the information to the primary clients for retransmission other clients
in the set of clients.
 7. A method of multicasting information to a set of clients comprising:
determining a network location for each of the clients;
determining a performance parameter for each of the clients;
selecting a subset of the clients to be primary clients based on the performance
parameter and the determined network location;
transmitting the information to the primary clients for retransmission other clients
in the set of clients.

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8. A method of adding a new client to a multicast group comprising:
receiving a request from the new client to subscribe to the multicast group;
selecting an existing client to transmit information to the new client based on the network locations of the new client and the existing client and a comparison of a performance parameter of the existing client with performance parameters of other existing clients.
9. A method of subscribing to a multicast group comprising:
sending a request to a server from a subscribing client to subscribe to the multicast group; and
receiving from the server an identifier of a transmitting client that will send data to the subscribing client; and
receiving the data from the transmitting client.
10. A method of forwarding information from a transmitting client to a receiving client in a multicast group comprising:
receiving an instruction from a multicast server to forward information to the receiving client;
receiving the information; and
forwarding the information to the receiving client.
11. A method of multicasting information to a set of clients as recited in claim 10 further including displaying the information to a user.
12. A method of multicasting information to a set of clients as recited in claim 10 further including displaying the information to a user without positively indicating to the user that the information is being forwarded.
13. A method of redirecting a receiving multicast client from a failed transmitting client comprising:
receiving a message from the receiving client that information is not being received;
sending a message to the receiving client indicating a new source of the information; and

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sending a message to the new source directing the new source to send the information to the receiving client.

14. A method of redirecting a receiving multicast client from a failed transmitting client as recited in claim 13 further including:

flagging a set of secondary receiving clients that are to receive the information from the receiving client so that the receiving client will not be failed in the event that a secondary receiving client sends a message indicating that information is not being received.

15. A method of redirecting a receiving multicast client from a failed transmitting client as recited in claim 13 further including:

sending a test message to the receiving client;

in the event that a valid response to the test message is not received, failing the receiving client and sending a message to a set of secondary receiving clients that are to receive the information from the receiving client that directs the secondary receiving clients to receive information from a new source.

16. A method of redirecting a receiving multicast client from a failed transmitting client as recited in claim 13 wherein the new source is a dedicated backup server that reliably sends information to redirected clients.

17. A method of redirecting a receiving multicast client from an under performing transmitting client comprising:

receiving a message from the receiving client indicating the rate that information is being received;

determining that the information rate falls below a performance standard;

sending a message to the receiving client indicating a new source of the information; and

sending a message to the new source directing the new source to send the information to the receiving client.

18. A server configured to multicast information to a set of clients comprising:

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a client interface configured to transmit the information to a primary client from the server and to instruct the primary client to forward the information to a secondary client.

19. A client configured to forward multicast information to another client comprising:
a server interface configured to receive the information from the server; and
a client interface configured to forward the information to the other client.
20. A system for multicasting information to a set of clients comprising:
a server configured to transmit the information; and
a primary client configured to receive the transmitted information and to forward the information to a secondary client.
21. A computer program product for multicasting information, the computer program product being embodied in a computer readable medium and comprising computer instructions for:
transmitting the information to a primary client from a server; and
instructing the primary client to forward the information to a secondary client.

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